

**STUDY OF THE PRINCIPLES OF VAASTU IN RELATION TO THE
BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND IT'S SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

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**A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Moratuwa, as a Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Architecture.**



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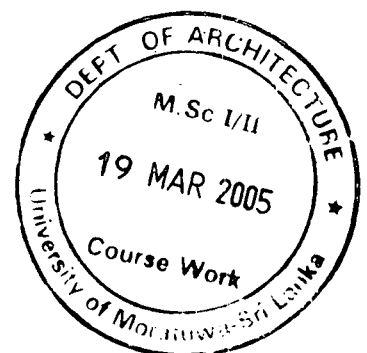
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Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own work, expect where, due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.


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Date : 19th March 2005.



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Introduction

Topic explanation

Architecture is a science more than an art, which needs an ordering principle to order itself. There are many principles, which have been used over the years. Vaastu Shastra was one of these which is based upon science. It is a blend of mathematics, environmental science, human biology, hydraulic science, soil mechanics and physics, and is strongly backed by laws of nature. The word Vaastu was known as Vaasthawya shastra or science of Vaastawya in the olden days. The meaning of the above is “the land which is suitable for living”.

Ancient civilizations had a vast knowledge about built environment and they considered architecture not only as a building exercise but also for organizing their environment and creating a specific atmosphere for living. The Indian architect, B. Niranjan Babu has defined thus ‘the ancients considered the dwelling as a living organism. Whether it was a temple (prasada) or a palace (rajagruha) or a residential dwelling (sala) or the image (chitra) or idol of a deity (vigraha) perfection was the word that the ancients desired. They considered the plot ‘kshetra’ and the dwelling (vaastu or avastha) as having a rhythm and beauty which vibes perfectly with nature. Each plot and building had life and there was a necessity of building structures to be in proportions based on certain formulae. When houses were built using these formulae, they were said to give the residents health, wealth and prosperity.

The author of Vaastu Sashikala Anand defined Vaastu in a nutshell as the traditional science of building designs and spatial configuration. The individual, as well as the collective, can live in greater harmony and property when human beings become aware of with subtle connections between space and form. To become aware of the natural environment and to build in consonance with it is the message of Vaastu. Using the principles of measurement, rhythm and proportion as the basis of all material manifestation, it states that the mind and spirit are capable of infusing life into a space, and promoting the free flow of energy.

Intention of the study

Vaastu has been based on a strong philosophy and it is rooted with our culture, thinking pattern and life. It is strongly based on an intuitive process of thinking and experimented over 2300 years. Western thinking pattern is something innovative and that is based on a linear logic. This

became the mode of transfer of scientific thought and technological practices. Both modes of thinking patterns are equally important and are products of great effort and contemplation of the human mind. What is needed for the future is to integrate and blend both modes of thinking patterns together, in order to give birth to a product which is more enriched and reflective from both rationality and intuitiveness.

Scope and limitations

Vaastu shastra is a very deep subject used in the built environment over thousands of years. It describes all the social aspects (cultural aspects, religion, superstitions and beliefs), architectural aspects (selection of the site, zoning it, designing the building.), technical aspects (taking measurements, construction work), and astrological aspects (futuristic vision, fortune etc.) of the building design. This study briefly defines the architectural principles of Vaastu shastra with its scientific reasoning. The study is mainly focused on Vaastu effects from the environment, neighborhood, plot and the building. The application of above principles on built environment is studied under two situations;

- Modern buildings
- Historical buildings



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Methodology

The study of Vaastu Shastra (the ordering principles in ancient architecture) is primarily based on Vaastu by Sashikala Anand and ancient documents like Mayamatha. Other relevant information is collected from Indian and Sri Lankan books and documents written by practicing architects, astrologers and with contributions by Vaastu consultant, Mr. Sujeewa Egodawatte. The study is examined under four main categories.

- Environmental effects of Vaastu
- Vaastu effects of the plot
- Vaastu effects of the building
- The scientific value of Vaastu Shastra and it's application in Sri Lankan architecture.

The first chapter is based on the historical background, the literal documents in the past and the governing factors of Vaastu. The second chapter is based on the environmental effects of Vaastu and its practicability. The third chapter is based about the principles of selecting a plot and zoning the plot. The designing process of the building based on Vaastu principles are examined under

chapter four. The final chapter describes and examines the relationship of Vaastu rules and science in relation to two buildings in Sri Lanka (Case Study).



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